

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending in this application. Applicant provisionally elects Group I, Claims 1-13 with traverse.

The Office action asserts that the invention recited in Group I, Claims 1-13, and Group II, Claims 14-17 are independent or distinct from the invention recited in Group I, Claims 1-13. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of independent Claims 1 and 4 are sufficiently related that a thorough search for the subject matter of any one independent claim would encompass a search for the subject matter of the remaining independent claim. Specifically, independent Claim 1 is directed to a vehicular trim component or headliner having an integrated-molded energy distribution zone. Likewise, independent Claim 14 is directed to a method for manufacturing an interior trim component by molding a core having an exterior surface with at least one integrally-molded energy distribution zone, contrary to the Office action, which asserts that the method can be used to make bottles. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the search and examination of the entire application could be made without serious burden. See MPEP §803, which states that "If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." (Emphasis added). It is respectfully submitted that this policy should apply in the present application in order to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to the Applicants and duplicative examination by the Patent Office. Thus, Applicant provisionally elects Group I, Claims 1-13 with traverse. Withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement is respectfully requested.

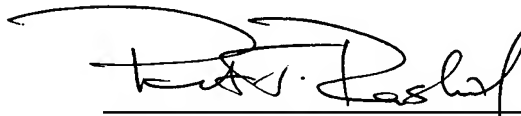
In response to the Election of Species Requirement, Applicant provisionally elects Species A directed towards Figure 1A. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 read on Figure 1A. Applicant is confused with respect to the Election of Species Requirement because, contrary to the Office action, Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 13 are generic claims to all Species A-F, Figures 1A-1G. Withdrawal of the Election of Species Requirement is respectfully requested.

It is respectfully submitted that at least the feature of a vehicular trim component or a

headliner comprising a core having an exterior surface with at least one integrally-molded energy distribution zone defines patentable subject matter. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application is earnestly solicited. Should Examiner Patel believe anything further would be desirable in order to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

It is believed that any additional fees due with respect to this paper have already been identified. However, if any additional fees are required in connection with the filing of this paper, permission is given to charge account number 50-3145 in the name of Honigman Miller Schwartz and Cohn LLP.

Respectfully submitted,



SIGNATURE OF PRACTITIONER

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